

Crime and Gun Control

Crime has wide-ranging and very serious effects on our communities. It's important that localities, states, and the federal government work in unison to ensure the protection of our citizens and the safety of our streets, neighborhoods, and schools.

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Additional resources:

- Department of Justice
- Federal Bureau of Investigation

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)

The COPS Office was created by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. As a component of the Justice Department, COPS works to advance community policing initiatives in jurisdictions of all sizes across the country. Community policing is a shift away from more traditional law enforcement toward the prevention of crime through effective problem-solving tactics and police-community partnerships. Community policing puts law enforcement professionals on the streets and assigns them a defined local beat so they can build mutually beneficial relationships with the people they serve.

The COPS program was recently reauthorized through fiscal year 2009 as part of H.R. 3402, the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005. While the reauthorization of this program is good news, it must be followed up with adequate funding from Congress for it to be effective. Rep. Eshoo has consistently supported funding the COPS program and sent a letter to President Bush, urging him to fully fund the COPS program at \$1 billion in his Administration's budget. Unfortunately, the President's Fiscal Year 2007 budget reduced funding for the COPS program by 79 percent.

Additional resources:

- Copy of Rep. Eshoo's letter to President Bush
- COPS website

Hate Crimes

Hate crimes are some of the most heinous acts that can be committed. Rep. Eshoo believes strongly in preserving the constitutional rights of all Americans to live free from fears of being targeted for violence because of the color of their skin, their sexual orientation, or their ethnicity. To help local law enforcement deal with the burden of prosecuting these crimes she proudly became an original cosponsor of H.R. 2662, the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. H.R. 2662 authorizes the Attorney General to provide technical, forensic, prosecutorial, or other assistance in the criminal investigation or prosecution of hate crimes and award grants to localities to help cover the costs associated with these cases.

Rep. Eshoo was pleased to support an amendment offered by Rep. Conyers to H.R. 3132, the Children's Safety Act, that incorporated H.R. 2662 into this legislation. Unfortunately, House leadership dropped the provisions of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act when the Child Safety Act was incorporated into a much broader crime bill, H.R. 4472, the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act of 2006. H.R. 4472 passed the House on March 8th of 2006.

Gun Control

While Rep. Eshoo respects the rights of hunters and lawful gun enthusiasts, she believes responsible gun control is vital to curbing crime. She shares this view with the majority of law enforcement.

As an original cosponsor of the Brady Bill, which required background checks for gun purchases, and as a supporter of the Assault Weapons ban, Rep. Eshoo has consistently voted for measures which protect the public from crime and safeguard the rights of responsible, law abiding citizens to own firearms.

Rep. Eshoo believes there is no sound public policy reason for repealing the assault weapons ban and was disappointed when President Bush allowed the ban to expire in September of 2004, despite a campaign promise that he would work toward its extension. She is currently a cosponsor of H.R. 1312, the Assault Weapons Ban and Law Enforcement Protection Act, which would reinstate the assault weapons ban.

Additional resources:

- Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence

School Violence

Schools are especially vulnerable to gun-related crimes. The tragedies of Columbine and Jonesboro are stark reminders

that our current gun laws are not strong enough. The current patchwork of laws and regulations are riddled with loopholes that criminals exploit, allowing guns into the wrong hands and often into the possession of children. Rep. Eshoo has supported legislation that closes these loopholes and increases penalties for gun dealers who willfully sell guns to minors. She has also supported requiring guns to be manufactured with improved safety features, such as childproof trigger locks.